THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

"*God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence*" (I. COR. 1: 27-29).

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THE SPIRIT WORLD.

THE doctrine of an intermediate state of existence between the death and resurrection of the body has been an accepted article of faith from the earliest days of Christianity, but it would seem to have been lost to a considerable extent to the churches which sprang up after the occurrence of that great Protestant movement known to us as the Reformation. The causes which led to that movement are matters of history. The steady growth of erroneous teachings in the then dominant church of Rome became so repugnant to many worshippers that they were constrained to cut themselves adrift from that communion. The leaders of the movement, good and earnest men though they were, appear to have been so carried away by their zeal for reform that they allowed themselves to make a too indiscriminate sweep of all the doctrines they looked upon as false. The Rev. Henry B. Browning, a Church of England clergyman, in the preface to his book "Words in Season," wrote in this connection as follows: "The effect of the Protestant movement was in some cases to root up the wheat of catholic verities along with the tares of false doctrine, with which it was intermixed. We have an example of this in the Romish doctrine of purgatory, which was uprooted by the reformers with such unsparing hands, that the true doctrine of an intermediate state, of which it is the perversion, has been well nigh lost."

The term perversion here used would seem to be a very appropriate one, inasmuch as the doctrine of purgatory, while being

itself erroneous, is not an unmixed falsity, because underlying it is the great scriptural truth of a place of detention of the immortal spirits of all God's earthly children between the death of their mortal bodies and the resurrection of the same in a changed and immortal condition.

The doctrine of this intermediate state of existence in the world of spirits has of late years become more and more accepted by the churches of Christendom; but it does not appear to have been taught at the time of the Reformation, nor, if we may judge from a perusal of some of the commentaries, sermons and other writings of the divines and leaders of religious thought of those days, for very many years afterwards. As a general rule, these writers seemed to have supposed that an individual passed at death directly either into heaven, the abode of God and of the holy angels, or into the burning depths of hell, the abode of Satan and of lost souls; that such a condition was changeless, permitting of no further hope beyond the grave for the unrighteous and the wicked. Mr. Browning would seem to have known of the existence of these views, for in a portion of his book already referred to, he has drawn attention to the fact that the supposition that all men pass immediately by death into either heaven or hell is a very great misapprehension.

What do we mortals know about that dim, distant land which is the dwelling place of the spirits of our dead, and towards which the spirit of each one now in the flesh will sooner or later be speeding? Certainly not very much, for it is not permitted to us to have a knowledge of anything over which the Almighty Father chooses to draw a veil; but, so far as He has seen fit to lift a corner of that veil for the consolation and happiness of His earthly children, we have been blessed with a glimpse of something of that future life on the other side of the grave, comforting our hearts in the contemplation of the infinite love and mercy of our God, which we find extended towards His erring sons and daughters, even into that shadowy land beyond. We learn that between the death and the resurrection of our bodies our disembodied spirits enter into a place of detention, consisting apparently of two distinctly separate parts or divisions, the one being allotted to the penitent, the God-fearing, the obedient, and the righteous, and the other to the impenitent, the Godless, the indifferent, the careless, the worldly and the vicious. To the former division our Lord Himself gave the name of paradise, while the latter place of detention has been designated by the inspired Apostle Peter as the prison, and which may therefore be looked upon as equivalent to a place of punishment. To the minds of some persons paradise is synonymous with heaven, but this view is decidedly unscriptural. Our Lord, for instance, told the penitent thief upon the cross that on that very day they would be together in paradise (Luke 23: 43). That place could certainly not have been heaven, inasmuch as

three days later, when Christ appeared to Mary at His resurrection, He said to her, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (John 20: 17); and we further know that it was not for forty days after this that He was taken up in the clouds to His Father's presence in heaven. Paradise and heaven must consequently be entirely different places. It was to the former that the spirits of our Lord and of the penitent thief went while their bodies rested in their earthly tombs. It was there that the spirit of the penitent thief was to fit itself for future happiness by obedience to the gospel, by which it would have to be judged thereafter. It was our Savior Himself who taught Nicodemus, the Pharisee, the doctrine that no one could possibly enter the kingdom of heaven except he were born of water as well as of the Spirit. We nowhere learn that the penitent thief had ever been born of the water, or, in other words, baptized while on earth; hence, according to our Lord's own teaching, he could not have entered into heaven. He was, however, permitted by the Savior, on account of his sincere repentance, to meet Him in paradise, and thus to escape the unhappy lot of the impenitent after death in the prison house of the spirit world beyond.

As regards this last-named place of detention the scripture speaks as follows: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (I. Peter 3: 18-20). Thus it is evident that to the spirits which had been detained in prison on account of their disobedience in the flesh two thousand two hundred years previously, did the Son of God Himself convey the gospel or glad message of salvation through His blood, for Peter adds, "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" (I. Peter 4: 6). Inasmuch, then, as men in the flesh have to repent and submit themselves to the ordinances and laws of the gospel before they can obtain salvation, so, too, it would seem that those spirits who in this life had closed their ears to the gospel message would have to become obedient thereto before they could look for a future salvation. The beautiful doctrine of salvation for the dead, as thus revealed to mankind, exhibits the wonderful long-suffering and tender love of God towards His earthly children, for it is evident that even the most disobedient and rebellious of them are not to be cast aside for ever, but may eventually receive a salvation and happiness by true repentance and obedience to the gospel of our Lord in the land beyond the veil. Yet for such, according to the description of the inspired Apostle Peter above referred to, it would

seem necessary that they should undergo a detention in a place of punishment for such period of time as the righteous Judge of all may see fit to ordain. God is very merciful, but at the same time He is just. True mercy, we know, can never rob justice, and therefore, it is only when the claims of justice are fully met that mercy is able to and does claim her own.

While, therefore, for the unregenerate and the evil doer there must, as death approaches, be a fearful looking forward to an impartial judgment, there can be nothing but happiness and joy for the penitent and righteous ones who, having accepted and become obedient to the gospel, have endeavored in this life to do their duty honestly and faithfully towards God and man, for in such a case they can confidently look forward to joining the happy band of the redeemed saints on the other side of the veil. For such, death is, as described by Bishop Walsham How, but the gateway to paradise, and paradise but the antechamber of heaven. When we attempt to contemplate the life of disembodied spirits, we must always find it difficult to realize what it can be like. It has been said by a writer that it is easier for us to understand a life of heavenly joy, because we shall then have a bodily existence, although in a glorified and sinless condition, but a bodiless existence is a difficult one to conceive. Still we are sure that in that unknown land beyond the grave there must be means of recognizing and communicating with one another, for our Lord in preaching the gospel to the spirits in prison must have informed them of the ransom that He had paid by His death on the cross, and those spirits must have had the faculty of both hearing and understanding His message, while doubtless, at the same time, they were able both to see and recognize Him as the Redeemer of the world, who had come to bring them the glad tidings of their deliverance and the opening of a way by which they could obtain a salvation in the eternity before them. This is the work that the Prophet Isaiah spoke of in the sixty-first chapter of his book, verse one, when referring to the Messiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

The more we contemplate the life of paradise, the more we seem to realize its beauties, and the happiness of those spirits who are privileged to enter therein. We are sure that our Savior will be there, and that, consequently, we shall enjoy His presence with us at all times, for the inspired apostle of the Gentiles, in writing to the Philippians, told them that he was in a strait between the choice of either abiding in the flesh for the furtherance of his work among them, or of passing away into a happy future, but that his real desire was to depart and be with Christ, which to him was far better (Chap. 1: 22-23). He also on another occasion expressed a

desire to be absent from the body and present with the Lord (II. Cor. 5: 8). Not only, then, will our Savior be there, with the redeemed saints of God, but the apostles, prophets, martyrs and other servants of the Lord will give the freed spirits happy greetings, while with words of loving welcome they will be met on the very threshold of paradise by those whom they have loved dearly on earth. Who is there among us that has not someone whom it will be joy to meet again on the other side of the grave—fathers, mothers, wives, husbands, children, brothers or sisters, to say nothing of dear and valued friends who have preceded us into the spirit world? Death to those who die in the Lord cannot then be fearsome. They will not be called upon to take long, lonely, and silent journeys, and seek out new acquaintances in some strange and dreary land. To the righteous death has only one regret, and that is the leaving behind for a time the small, sorrowing band of loved ones; but the true sting of death is not theirs, for that sting is sin. There are heavenly beings who, we read, are appointed to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and as the spirits leave their earthly tenements, they will doubtless be escorted by these radiant ministers of the Lord into the happy paradise beyond, where, with their dear ones, they will patiently await the joyous resurrection morn and the consummation of everlasting bliss.

There is, therefore, nothing lonely in death. It is but the stepping stone to a condition of existence where, freed from sin, sorrow, and the cares and anxieties of this life, the spirits of the just will have revealed to them new and more perfect knowledge of true wisdom, happiness and joy, while the very fact of being one of the redeemed throng of God's saints in paradise must be a very joy in itself. The poet Longfellow beautifully says:

"Ah, the souls of them that die
Are but sunbeams lifted higher."

To the faithful, therefore, there can be nothing dreadful in passing out of this life, for in their case all sin has been washed away by the Savior's blood, and death becomes but the golden gate through which they have to pass to a life of happiness, where doubtless they will find ample scope for fuller, higher, and more complete work in the service of Him who, in His love, has secured for them eternal mansions in the glorious kingdom of their Father in heaven.

St. Heliers, Jersey. R. M. BRYCE-THOMAS.

IT would rob death of half its sting to be assured that daily your face would live before the vision of faithful hearts, and your memory, with redeeming faults as well as some few excellencies, be kept green by unchanging affection.—DR. J. WATSON.

ATTEMPTING THE IMPOSSIBLE.

"Facts are chiels that winna' ding
An' daurna' be disputed."—BURNS.

AYE, "Facts are stubborn things." When will the "learned" learn this? If true learning consists of a "knowledge of things as they are," some of the learned ones take a very peculiar way of arriving at such a "knowledge." Bishop Spalding seems to be one of these: for, after making strained efforts to disprove the foundation of "Mormonism," yet he fails to perceive how blunted his tools are after the attack, or how mockingly its stubbornness demonstrates his foolishness. Several of our leading brethren have shown very clearly the weakness of the Bishop's premises relative to the "'Mormon' faith and Joseph Smith's reliability as a translator;" but one of them goes a step further respecting the results of men's testing the matter than I, as a "Mormon," am prepared to go. He says, concerning the Latter-day Saints, "they have appealed to the world to investigate the claims of their religion, and stand ready to accept the results." Well, I am not prepared to "accept the results." In my journey through life thus far, I have met quite a number of men of various nationalities, and I am not prepared to take any of them on trust that far. I *know* what "Mormonism" is and the results that follow obedience to its principles; hence no verdict could change my thonghts in relation to it. No verdict from my fellowmen, honest or otherwise, can change my knowledge of facts. Honesty is one of "Mormonism's" essentials; but intelligence is another, and both are essential to a righteous verdict. Any verdict denying the divinity of Joseph Smith's message, or the righteousness of the principles revealed through him, would demonstrate to me the absence of one or both of these essentials. This may seem rash to those whose religion is faith only; but when "faith" fails to bring "knowledge," it is not true faith in Jesus Christ and His gospel. Knowledge obtained through this faith cannot be swayed by any verdict.

One writer quotes the Bishop as saying: "Was the translation of the Book of Mormon correct?" and again as saying, "Joseph Smith's competency as a translator of ancient languages can be ascertained in but one way. The original text, together with their interpretations, must be submitted to "competent scholars!" Bishop Spalding bars the way of honest prayer by a substitution of "competent scholars" and "original texts." "Cursed is he that trusteth to man or maketh flesh his arm" has no weight with him: hence "original texts" and "competent scholars" are his final resort. The original texts of the Book of Mormon are beyond his reach, but he has found a few prints of the original texts of the Book of Abraham, and with eight "competent scholars" proceeds to show that Joseph Smith was not a "reliable translator of ancient languages." Here is, in part, how he does it. "These

eight eminent Egyptologists are almost a unit in declaring that the hieroglyphics reproduced from the Book of Abraham were not correctly translated by Joseph Smith, and that the facsimiles themselves are very poor copies of the original records." Of course, I may be mistaken; but I am inclined to believe that the originals from which the copies were taken were not available either, and that the "eight eminent Egyptologists" could only arrive at a conclusion through a conception of what the originals ought to have been.

The conclusion arrived at, therefore, was that "Joseph Smith's translation was not correct," because the copied characters were not correctly reproduced from the supposed originals! This may be how the mare's nest was found. From Abraham to Bishop Spalding and his eight eminent Egyptologists is a far cry. Thousands of years have come and gone between. Changes without number have had their day both in men and in things pertaining to men. To-day we have an ideal standard of caligraphy. How does that standard compare with that of our fathers a thousand years ago, or how will it compare with that of our children a thousand years hence? I am afraid ours are "poor copies of the original," and that our children's will be very poor copies of ours. Nay, more; in respect to our present ideal standard, how many of us are able to "reproduce" anything else than "very poor copies" of the original. I reckon myself a fair writer, yet I could not have the courage to blame another should he think himself justified in pronouncing me a wretched writer. I have no doubt many have laughingly pronounced such a verdict upon the Bishop and each of his eight eminent scholars. Each has a style of caligraphy peculiar to himself. Could it reasonably be expected that Abraham stood alone, abiding rigidly by a perfect copy of the then original standard? Assuredly not; hence that part of Spalding's "argument" amounts to nothing, save showing his blindness in not perceiving its weakness prior to rushing into print.

But it is said that the "eight eminent Egyptologists" were "almost a unit" in their verdict! Now, why were they not a "unit?" The answer is plain. They disagreed. If they were competent scholars they ought to have been a unit. Some evidently were not "competent." Were any of them "competent scholars?" If so, which? Ah! even the Bishop cannot tell! Was the young untutored, unlettered boy from the backwoods so clever, that some, perhaps the only "competent scholars" of the "eight eminent Egyptologists" agreed with him? Well done, Joseph Smith! Or rather, "We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Glasgow. JOSEPH LEGGAT.

No pleasure is comparable to that of standing on the vantage ground of truth.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1913.

EDITORIAL.

"JOSEPH SMITH, JR., AS A TRANSLATOR."

THE Episcopal Bishop of Utah, the Right Rev. F. S. Spalding, recently published a brochure entitled, "Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator." His avowed aim was to prove that the Prophet Joseph Smith failed as a translator of ancient Egyptian language, and also of the Book of Mormon: and that, consequently, his claim to be a Prophet of God cannot be established. The work in question called forth several complete and masterly replies from leading brethren of the Church. The *Improvement Era* of February devotes forty pages of space to articles and letters bearing upon the Bishop's document. These cover nearly every conceivable phase of the question, and, while exhibiting the manifest unfairness and insufficiency of the investigation made by the distinguished cleric, they incidentally shed much light upon the real strength and divinity of the great latter-day work founded by the Prophet Joseph Smith, under the direction of the Lord.

Our limited space of necessity precludes the possibility of giving even a summary of the main issues discussed, or of doing justice to any one of the many able and eloquent replies that have been published. We have, however, selected from some of these a few striking thoughts, bearing upon specific points, which we take pleasure in giving for the benefit of those of our readers who have no fuller information concerning this interesting discussion.

Elder B. H. Roberts, of the First Council of Seventy, calls attention to the unfairness of the critics of modern revelation in demanding that it be submitted to an exacting test that ancient revelation could not possibly abide, as is frankly admitted by the foremost theological scholars of the age. In a lengthy article, after successfully meeting every vital issue, he concludes as follows:

> I would suggest to my own people that they should remember that there is a wide difference between the thing that one may not be able to explain and the thing which overthrows his theory altogether. One may not always account fully for his truth, nor beat down successfully all objections that may be urged against it; but it remains truth, just the same. And so in this case.

I believe that in the translations Joseph Smith has given to the world—confessedly not by scholarship but by inspiration, by his own spirit being quickened by contact with God's Spirit—that in those translations are truths that are parts of a mighty system of truth, the like of which is not found elsewhere among men. And that system of truth, now being worked out in the experiences of both individual men and nations of men, will receive, ere the end, a splendid vindication both as a system and in all its parts.

And here I might paraphrase a passage from George Rawlinson employed in his "Historical Evidences of the Truth of the Scriptural Records." If any new form of evidence shall hereafter be needed to meet new forms of attack, and authenticate afresh the word of truth, they will be found deposited somewhere, waiting for the fullness of time; and God will bring them forth in their season, from the dark hieroglyphics, or the desert sands, or the dusty manuscripts, to confound the adversaries of His word, and to magnify His name.

Secure in such a conviction, here let us stay ourselves, nothing daunted: and let the world's investigation of our truth be welcomed, confident, with the apostle of the Gentiles, that nothing can be done against the truth, but for the truth.

Elder J. M. Sjodahl, editor of the *Deseret News*, points out that the Latter-day Saints have no prejudice against scholarship. He shows that the mere scholarly test is inconclusive, as the most eminent scholars are not agreed, and with advancing knowledge they are continually being forced to change their base. He says:

Bishop Spalding's chief argument is this: Because there is a difference of opinion between certain eminent scholars and the Prophet Joseph concerning the meaning of the hieroglyphics the Prophet translated, therefore he is wrong and the scholars are right. This is the most extraordinary attempt at logic ever put forth by a scholar. The conclusion rests upon the monstrous assumption that there is an infallible, unchangeable scholarship, incapable of receiving more light, and to contradict which is heresy. We know better, and the Rev. gentleman knows better. He knows that scholars sometimes are wrong, and that they are compelled by facts to abandon old theories for new ones. In the case of a difference of opinion, how does he know which side is certainly right? How does he know that the Prophet is not right, and that those on the other side are not wrong? Mathematics is an exact science, and its propositions may be demonstrated, but not so archeology.

To illustrate the fact that scholars sometimes are wrong: Until this time it has been confidently maintained that the religion of Palestine came from Babylonia. Another view has recently been announced by Albert T. Clay, an authority on cuneiform inscriptions. He says "that the Semitic-Babylonian religion is an importation from Syria and Palestine (Amurru), that the creation, deluge, ante-diluvian patriarchs, etc., of Babylonia, came from Amurru, instead of the Hebraic stories having come from Babylonia, as held by nearly all Semitic scholars." Here is a possible change announced in the conceptions of scholarship, which promises a complete scientific revolution.

There is no infallibility in scholarship. To assume that the Prophet was wrong simply because scholars say so is to beg the question.

We have no prejudice against scholarship. Scholars are witnesses, and their testimony on any question is of as much value as "expert" testimony always is, provided it is unprejudiced and based on facts. But as to that the jury, in this case the public, must be the judge. Scholarship certainly has a right to a respectful hearing, but it happens that the authorities quoted by Bishop Spalding disagree on some essential points, in their translations. In fact, they contradict each other, and their testimony is, consequently, of less value than it would have been otherwise.

Bishop Spalding's effort is not new to Latter-day Saints who have followed the history of the Church. His argument is one that has been heard before, without disturbing in the least the faith that rests on solid foundations. It has been fairly and squarely met in the past, and will be answered again whenever occasion requires, with increasing clearness as the researches continue to reveal further data.

The Latter-day Saints court inquiry, such as this. They want to know the truth, and only the truth. There is no important issue they are not glad to face, whether presented by friend or foe. Their religion has stood every test to which it has been submitted, and it will remain unshaken for ever, because it is founded upon the Rock, and its origin is the Source of all Truth.

Prof. John A. Widtsoe, M.A., Ph. D., has a lengthy reply, in the form of a letter to Bishop Spalding, in the *Deseret News* of January 30th, 1913, in which he calls attention particularly to the unscientific methods pursued by that gentleman in his alleged "inquiry" into the Prophet's work as a translator. Professor Widtsoe's letter contains the following:

The very first words in the text of the book explain why the inquiry must be an honest search after truth. "If the Book of Mormon is true, it is next to the Bible, the most important book in the world." You later explain that, according to your method of thinking, if Joseph Smith interpreted the Egyptian hieroglyphics in the Pearl of Great Price correctly, the Book of Mormon must be true; if incorrectly, must be false. With such an important matter at stake, the inquiry certainly must be an honest search, a thoroughly scientific investigation, for if the translation is wrong, it means the salvation from gross error of the half million souls in the "Mormon" Church; if right, the doubling of the holy books of all Christendom.

I confess that your purpose thus clearly shown appealed to me immensely. To have a trained, capable mind apply itself with all the resources of the age, to a thoroughly scientific examination of a point in "Mormonism," put on edge my expectant appetite. Why did you not carry out your purpose? Can not a man carry to the end an inquiry concerning "Mormonism?" Instead of passing a direct opinion on the book, let me express it indirectly, in the form of some questions which I ask in all sincerity "as an honest searcher after truth," and in the hope that you may be persuaded to continue the inquiry.

Why did you secure opinions from eight men? Why not from eighty?

This is not a matter which has been examined and re-examined until settled beyond dispute. As I remember, I have heard you say that you are not an Egyptologist; neither am I. If, therefore, we are to rest our decided opinions concerning Egyptology upon the opinions of others, we should certainly follow the statistical procedure and reduce the probable error by bringing in all the possible witnesses. True, there is not an abundance of persons who claim the ability to read Egyptian hieroglyphics, but certainly many scores are found in the countries of the world. You have certainly used the statistical method in a most unscientific manner.

According to the method of science, every precaution should be taken to prevent the element of prejudice from entering the observations sought. "Mormonism," thanks to the efforts of sundry members of the Christian clergy, is not a popular system of theology. Egyptologists, even the most eminent, are men of flesh and blood, and subject to the common passions of the race. Why did you not, in this day of photo-engraving, spend the dollar or two necessary to secure cuts freed from the context of the Pearl of Great Price? It was not at all necessary, in a scientific inquiry, to let the jury know the source of the hieroglyphics; the question at issue was simply the meaning of them. The prejudicing of your witnesses, accidental as I hope it to have been, was distinctly unscientific, and reduces greatly the value of the testimony.

May I ask you further, why, in an inquiry to be characterized by an honest search after truth, you did not call attention to the doubtful value of some of the opinions received as evidenced by the manifest prejudice and ill temper of the authors? Do you think Dr. Sayce was helping you in your honest search after truth when he opened his letter with the words, "It is difficult to deal seriously with Joseph Smith's impudent fraud?" Was he in a frame of mind to render impartial judgment on the subject? The spirit of this opening sentence is not scientific, and evidently it had not been impressed upon Dr. Sayce that this inquiry was an honest search after the truth of one of the most vital matters before civilized man. I assure you that the authors of your letters were not half so much amused at "Joseph Smith's impudent fraud," as I was at the introduction of such opinions as the foundations of an important conclusion, into a book professedly embodying the history and findings of the scientific inquiry by a man liberally trained in the learning of the day.

You declare that the subject is of highest importance to all Christendom; nevertheless you proceed to base your conclusions on the opinions of eight scholars, when scores are available; you show an unscientific haste to get into print; you accept without question the authority of these men; you ignore the radical differences in their opinions; you fail to make the necessary minute comparisons and bibliographical researches; you virtually deny the symbolical meaning of all Egyptian funeral inscriptions; you refrain from mentioning the striking similarities between Joseph Smith's translation and your eight opinions; you disregard the possible internal evidences of the Book of Abraham in support of the Prophet's translation; you are silent on the whole vital matter of Egypt and Abraham; you have prejudiced your witnesses, though probably unintentionally; your eight letters are not in the remotest sense studies of the matter under

consideration: you have accepted at their face value letters that are clearly prejudiced and ill-tempered. Were it not that you have said otherwise, I should be tempted to say from the internal evidences of the book, that you prejudiced the case and wrote the conclusion before the investigation began.

Professor N. L. Nelson, of the Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, in "An Open Letter to Bishop Spalding," published in the *Deseret News* of February 15th, 1913, replies to the reverend gentleman at considerable length. The following passages from his letter are particularly striking:

Is it not about time, my dear fellow worker, that we gave up that foolish proposition, which forms the back-bone of your inquiry, viz., that any document put forward as a divine revelation must be "flawless" by all the human standards that happen to be in vogue at the time?

If God's perfection must be mirrored in every document which His voice proclaims to be "true," then we should have a revelation utterly meaningless to man till such time as he shall attain to the same perfection. To make this plain, we have only to suppose the modern geological explanation of creation to have been given to the ancients instead of the account in Genesis. What meaning could it possibly have had for them? Such a bit of modern truth injected out of relation with all the rest of the thoughts and experiences of the race for several thousand years to come? But could God not have revealed a sufficient arc of creation, as modern science now understands it, so as to bring the ancients nearer to truth?

The answer is no. First, because to do so would violate the fundamental principle of divine education, the absolute need of self-effort to psychic development; and, second, because the more truth he would reveal, as moderns see truth, the more would the mental life of the ancients have been confused; just as the truths now known to intelligences a million ages in advance of us, would, were they imposed upon our intellects by divine fiat, serve only to blight our spiritual development. For, though we might hold such "truths" reverently, they would not be "true" to us, any more than a stone would be digestible, because held in the stomach. That only is true to any one which can be felt to be true—i.e., which can be assimilated, and incorporated with the body of his experiences. Man may and should hold reverently many things, because of the authority that utters them; but they will become true to him only when the time comes that they can be woven into the tapestry of his soul-life.

In the third place, any considerable revelation of modern science, could not have been made to the ancients, out of sheer failure to find a being able to voice it. Nay, even the symbols necessary to convey the thought were not in existence.

Prof. Nelson, in conclusion, points out that the work of translation was but an incident of the great latter-day work, and he indicates its true source and strength in these words:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was in a very definite sense independent of Joseph Smith. The time is now opportune to explain that the relation between the two is like that between the planter of a tree and the tree itself. Observe that without the planter and his care

during the early part of its life, there would have been no tree at all; nevertheless its life comes not from the planter but from God; its growth may be promoted or retarded, and its fruit be scrubby or luscious, according to the care it receives from the husbandman, but the fact that it lives and bears fruit at all is due ultimately to the Creator.

So also of the Church. It will always stand indebted to Joseph Smith both as founder and protector, but to God and to Him only for the Spirit which is its life. Nor is this life of the Spirit merely a collective possession of the Church, with its voice in the living oracles; it is likewise, or may become, the peculiar endowment of each member.

Paul points out the true source of the Church in a single phrase: "The power of God unto salvation," inherent in each true member. Not in tenet, therefore, nor doctrine, nor ordinance, nor ceremony, nor organization, must we look for the secret of its strength; but in the "power of God unto salvation;" in other words, to the Holy Spirit poured out upon each member.

When each member is thus directly "taught of God" (see John 6: 45), do you see how incongruous it is to represent the Church as resting upon a single pillar, and that an historical one? Nor does the Church rest upon twelve or fifteen pillars—the presidency and quorum of apostles—as is so often maintained. It rests on thousands of pillars. Indeed, every member with a testimony of the gospel is such a pillar: and new pillars of divine grace are going heavenward every day. Rather a formidable forest of columns—is it not?—for any man to attack with the fragile spear of intellectual negation!

The attempt of Bishop Spalding to strike a deadly blow at "Mormonism," like many similar ones in recent years, has proved to be a failure. His "inquiry" was too hasty and superficial to achieve any definite results of real value in the interests of truth. His chosen circle of learned experts was too narrow to be truly representative of the scholarship of the age, and the manifest prejudice of some of them tends to reduce greatly the value of their testimony. The fact that there are vital differences in their views upon the matters submitted to them detracts still further from the force of their conclusions. A question of such supreme importance to the world as the authenticity of certain documents that are regarded as Divine Revelation by half a million of earnest believers in the Christian religion, is entitled to more careful, impartial and exhaustive consideration than it has yet received.

H. I.

PRESIDENT CLAWSON ON THE CONTINENT.

President Rudger Clawson, writing under date Liege, Belgium, March 10th, 1913, relates some pleasant and interesting experiences, as follows:

I have just completed a four weeks' visit to the Swiss and German and French missions. I found conditions generally favorable to missionary work. Interesting and profitable meetings,

both for the elders and the public, were held at Budapest, Vienna, Linz, Lüzern and Basel.

An earnest effort has been made during the past four years to proselytize among the Hungarians in Budapest, but without success. This labor represents considerable outlay of means and close application on the part of the elders in studying the language, which in the speaking appears to twist the tongue into a knot—a deception of the hearing of the ear rather than the seeing of the eye. As an example of "love's labor lost," Elder S. J. Quinney pathetically related that he had delivered an average of eight hundred tracts a month for nine months, and as a result could not point to a single Hungarian friend or investigator. In most instances people who attended the public meetings listened attentively, withdrew at the close, and never returned. The sum total of the four years' operations at Budapest was one solitary convert and baptism—a German woman. We were driven to the conclusion that the Hungarian people are not ready for the gospel, and it was finally decided to discontinue missionary work amongst them for the present. The elders laboring in Budapest will be sent to Germany.

On March 7th three exceptionally instructive Priesthood meetings were held at Basel, with the elders of Bern, Zürich, Stüttgart and Frankfort conferences, some forty being in attendance. Good reports were made and strong testimonies borne by this band of young elders, who evinced a lively and abounding interest in the work of the Master. The words of faith, hope, and courage which they uttered, had they fallen upon the ears of their parents in distant Zion, would have warmed their hearts and caused joy unspeakable. These young men are clean, temperate, virtuous, humble defenders of the truth, valiant in every good word and work, being worthy emissaries of the Church of Christ. President Valentine is a strong advocate of the word, and has the love and hearty support of his elders. It is safe to predict a successful year for the Swiss and German mission.

A pleasing feature of the conference was a banquet given at the Bowers Hotel in the evening. A modest but substantial meal was served. Elder Conrad Jensen met the onerous requirements of toast-master creditably. A spirit of sociability and good cheer prevailed. Speeches, toasts, select readings, witticisms, and solos, both instrumental and vocal, were the order of the occasion. As the festivities drew to a happy conclusion, Sister Stelter, voicing the sentiments of the president and elders of the Swiss and German mission, presented the President of the European mission with a very handsome traveling toilet set. It came as a great surprise, but brought with it the love and confidence of the donors; and, in behalf of the elders of the mission, Sister Valentine presented Brother and Sister Stelter, who have been laboring on the *Stern* for the past two years, and who are about to return to their home, with a fine camel's hair rug. Heartfelt responses were made

by the parties honored, and the company dispersed after an evening of rare enjoyment.

President Brossard and the elders of the French mission are working enthusiastically and feel well. By the end of this month they will have baptized thirty-one souls, which is a greater number by two than the baptisms for the entire year of 1912. This is very encouraging, and is one of the many evidences that justifies the new mission organization. President Brossard is a sweet-spirited, energetic, devoted servant of the Lord, and with his well-known energy and systematic methods is getting results. He has the entire confidence and willing support of his elders, who are valiant in the testimony of Jesus.

A spirited Priesthood meeting was held in Liege, March 9th, 1913. At the close, President Brossard, acting for and in behalf of the elders of the French mission, presented the President of the European mission with a handsome vase. The gift was accompanied by a written tribute of love and respect, bearing the signatures of President Brossard and twenty-six elders, a copy of which follows:

"March 9th, 1913.

"ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON,

"President of the European Mission.

"Dear brother:—We, the elders of the French mission, do hereby present to you this beautiful vase, made by the world-famous French artist, 'Gelle,' of Nancy, France.

"This we do in loving remembrance and as a tribute of our respect and gratitude for your innumerable services in our behalf in ministering to our needs, in your most high and holy calling as an Apostle of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and specifically as President of the European mission.

"We are particularly grateful for the interest you took in our birth as a 'French Mission,' and we dedicate this vase to the twofold service of vividly picturing to you that unique scene of organization at Paris on October 15th, 1912, and of representing the constantly-changing panorama of the world in advancing truth. For, as time goes on, so also does the map of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints change.

"May all past changes in the French mission be dreams of eternal happiness to you, and all future ones visions of eternal joy; and may this token, so typical of the nation which we represent, draw forcibly to your mind your most righteous connections with us, as a mission and as individuals.

"To this then, 'the greatest of services,' do we dedicate our emblem and souvenir in love to you, our brother."

A deeply appreciative response was made by the recipient, who said that this splendid expression of the love and goodwill of the elders of the French mission for him as a fellow servant and colaborer in the cause of truth, together with the words that accom-

panied it, would ever be held by him as a priceless treasure, constantly recalling precious memories of the past, and never failing to remind him of the organization of the French mission.

RUDGER CLAWSON.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Releases and Departures.—Elder George O. Russell, of the Swiss and German mission, has been honorably released and sailed for home March 6th, 1913, per s.s. *Baltic*. The following named missionaries have been honorably released and sailed for home March 7th, 1913, per s.s. *Grampian*: From Great Britain—Richard S. Sleight, Gilbert Powelson, John B. Taylor, Harper W. Noble. From Sweden—James J. Dahl, Elias P. Forsgren. With the company were thirty-three emigrants in charge of Elders Richard S. Sleight, John B. Taylor and James J. Dahl.

Arrivals.—The following named missionaries for the European mission arrived March 10th, 1913, per s.s. *Tunisian*: Thomas Joseph Peck, William R. Goates, Virgil A. Fjeld, Lehi, Utah; George H. Brewerton, Raymond, Canada; George Albert Hunt, Plain City, Utah; James E. Davis, Henry W. Glissmeyer, Salt Lake City; William C. Harvey, Pleasant Grove, Utah; Walter H. Hadlock, Ogden; William Henry Bangerter, Granger, Utah; Alma Bangerter, Woods Cross, Utah; Willis N. Parkinson, Hyrum, Utah; Emil Neilson, Afton, Wyoming; Otto A. Harrison, Osmond, Wyoming; Alma A. Olson, Richmond, Utah; Victor E. Erickson, Sandy, Utah; George Q. Allen, Cove, Utah; Richard M. Johnson, Springville, Utah.

Appointments.—The missionaries who arrived for the British mission, March 10th, 1913, have been appointed to labor in the following conferences: Thomas Joseph Peck, Leeds; George Albert Hunt, James E. Davis, Manchester; William R. Goates, Irish; George H. Brewerton, Birmingham.

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